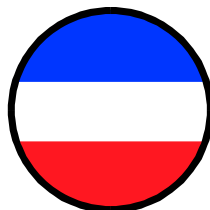


Winning Spirit



U.S. Army Forces Command



U.S. Army Forces Command



**... a powerful
and pervasive
winning spirit
... creates
superior
soldiers, leaders
and
organizations.**

This paper's purpose is to describe my thoughts on a subject I consider vitally important--the subject of Winning Spirit. Let me give you the bottom line up front: I am absolutely and totally convinced that a powerful and pervasive Winning Spirit is what creates superior soldiers, leaders, and organizations. This belief is reflected in the end state of my commander's intent:

*U.S. Army Forces Command, trained and ready, a proud team of teams, energized throughout by a powerful and pervasive **winning spirit**, achieves and sustains balanced readiness in support of our Nation, while caring for our soldiers, civilians, retirees, and families, and preserving and improving our high quality installations.*

Winning Spirit is inextricably linked to both the American experience and to our American heritage. In less than 200 years, our forefathers, driven by a burning Winning Spirit, overcame seemingly insurmountable challenges and transformed the United States from a vast, uncharted wilderness into the greatest nation in human history. During the same period, American soldiers epitomized Winning Spirit. . . both in peace and in war. The indomitable spirit and will to win of our citizen soldiers at Lexington and Concord, lives on to the present day in the magnificent performance of our Forces Command team of teams.

Winning Spirit



The Winning Spirit of America's soldiers is rooted in our early history and is the foundation of the warrior's ethos. This ethos is characterized by vigor, courage, tenacity; by an absolute refusal to quit; by a burning, unquenchable drive to win. Winning Spirit-infused soldiers and leaders always go the extra mile; they refuse to accept minimums; and they exercise constant initiative within the commander's intent. Like an athlete preparing for the Olympic Games, warriors with Winning Spirit strive to be the best of the best, and they see their honest mistakes not as failures but as opportunities to learn, grow, and improve. In creating Winning Spirit, fear of failure has no part to play. Instead, our focus must be on executing to standard, learning from our mistakes, and always, always, always keeping our eyes on the prize--victory.

No team can reach its full potential unless the fire of Winning Spirit burns brightly in its soul. True winners--whether in sports, business, or the military--share many common traits: they look like winners, they think like winners, they act like winners, and they make others feel like winners. Winners stay focused; winners never quit; and winners keep attacking until the final whistle blows.

In my mind, there are four essential components in creating a Winning Spirit. First, every member of the team must be held to **standards**. Second, **leadership** is critical in transforming individual efforts into team success. Third, the team must possess a set of **shared values**. Finally, the team must be permeated with **pride**. Let me briefly describe my thoughts on each of these components.



U.S. Army Forces Command



Standards

We serve in a doctrine-based Army in which standards are clear in every effort we undertake. We train to a standard, execute maintenance to a standard, and have standards for discipline and appearance. Soldiers and leaders with Winning Spirit reject any tendency toward complacency and they refuse any inclination to deviate from established standards. They are disappointed when things are too easy or when “it doesn’t matter if you win or lose.” Leaders--and most importantly commanders--must enforce standards whether in the barracks or in the field, whether in peace or in war.

Winners are never content with the status quo.

In enforcing standards, winners never rest on their laurels or bask in past victories--winners constantly push the excellence envelope and seek to make themselves and their organization better each and every day. Winners are never content with the status quo. Winners find it totally unacceptable when standards are not met. Standards can be a goal, an incentive, a proud achievement; standards help us accentuate the positive. True winners practice hard, train to standard, and pursue a winning strategy that requires meticulous preparation. Therefore, we will resource training based on the events we must conduct in order to be mission ready, while linking these specific events to the 800 mile funding model. Expanding our preparation for the CTCs, implementing the gate strategy in training, restoring TF level training and EXEVALs are all opportunities for commanders to instill this Winning Spirit.

Winning Spirit

In meeting standards, soldiers and leaders must never resort to gamesmanship, shortcuts, or questionable ethical conduct. Such practices cheapen the value of the results obtained and erode instilling Winning Spirit in individuals and teams.

Leadership

In the leadership arena, Winning Spirit manifests itself in the indomitable will and confidence possessed by leaders and in leaders inculcating the same indomitable will and confidence in their subordinates. Whether in peace or war, hardship and adversity are the greatest tests of Winning Spirit. But in the presence of leaders who demonstrate Winning Spirit in thought, word, and deed, hardship and adversity will not prevail. Leaders must be experts and standard bearers in their units. They must be competent, knowledgeable, skilled, disciplined, and have a positive attitude.

When General Mathew Ridgway assumed command of Eighth Army in December 1950 he "...discovered that our forces were simply not mentally and spiritually ready for...action...." In short, the Winning Spirit of Eighth Army had been extinguished. General Ridgway, in the face of almost unimaginable hardships, including massive Chinese intervention, took decisive steps to reignite the Winning Spirit of Eighth Army. By the strength of his leadership, General Ridgway set Eighth Army on a course back to acting like a winning outfit--vehicles would be washed; soldiers would be fed hot meals daily; weapons would be cleaned and inspected. Most importantly, General Ridgway demanded that leaders imbue their soldiers with a Winning Spirit--an absolute conviction that not only could Eighth Army win, but that it would win.



Colonel John Michaelis, commander of the 27th Infantry Regiment and one of the Korean War's greatest leaders, termed General Ridgway's transformation of Eighth Army "magic."

Yet, there really was no magic--just an understanding by General Ridgway of the bonds between Winning Spirit, leadership, and victory. He understood that without the lifeblood of a "Winning Spirit" flowing through his army, defeat was certain.

U.S. Army Forces Command

Turning individuals into a championship team requires leaders like General Ridgway--leaders who know what it takes to win, who make winning a habit, and who will accept nothing less than victory. Doctrine, training, materiel, organizational structures, and soldiers all play critical roles in building a great Army. But the key element in harnessing the power of every other element is leadership--leadership which demonstrates a burning desire to win...which is driven to prevail over all odds. Leadership that superbly executes all assigned missions--even when the assigned mission is nasty, hard, and unpleasant. Leaders must understand the emotional component--the adrenaline...the physical sensations involved in winning against tough competition. We must routinely expose our leaders to this experience in training.

Talent, training, equipment, and support are good, but not good enough. You must have the will--the internal desire--to win. A leader's winning spirit is so pervasive that it spreads like wildfire through every soldier in the unit. It is contagious and it sets great leaders apart from others.

As General Ridgway proved in Korea's frozen hell during the winter of 1950 to 1951, Winning Spirit-infused leadership is what allows our Army to prevail, to come out on top, to win. In FORSCOM, we must promote General Ridgway's style of Winning Spirit based leadership--it is the "magic" that enables teams to reach their full potential.

Shared Values

Our Army holds dear the values of loyalty, duty, respect, selfless service, honor, integrity, and personal courage. These values must be the touchstone for our every action; staying true to these values creates a positive command climate in which Winning Spirit flourishes best.

Our values fuel our drive to win--regardless of the effort required or the danger present. They enable us to operate as a team in which all team members trust each other with their very lives. They enable us to treat each other with dignity and respect.

**... our
values are
the glue that
binds our
Army
together...**



Our values reflect the highest ideals of selfless service to the nation. Ultimately, our values are the glue that binds our Army together--in peace and in war, in good times and bad times.

Our every action as soldiers and leaders must clearly demonstrate our absolute belief in the sanctity of our Army's values. By staying true to the values that we hold dear, we can balance the drive to win with the imperative of doing what is right.

Winning Spirit

Pride

Pride makes a difference. If you don't believe that, ask a soldier. He or she will tell you that they want to act like a winner, talk like a winner, and, most importantly, be a winner. Many soldiers join the Army because they have a basic jump start on personal pride.



Winning spirit is the ultimate force multiplier...

They want to make something out of their life; they want to get some basic discipline and some direction; they are seeking to be proud of themselves. Pride starts with a positive, learning command climate. Leaders must reward teamwork and team players.

This reminds me of the story a soldier told me when I asked him why he had joined the Army: "Because my Mom told me I was worthless and lacked pride in myself. Well, I found pride in the Army! Now I am proud of myself; but better yet, my Mom says she is proud of me." Another soldier told me: "Pride...once I found it, I didn't know how I lived without it." PRIDE--it is the ingredient that makes soldiers stand tall, walk with a special stride and purpose, brag to family, friends and others about their team, and fight shoulder-to-shoulder with their buddies in the hardest of conditions. It's really quite simple--pride makes the difference.

Conclusion

Standards, leadership, shared values, and pride are the key components in creating Winning Spirit. Our soldiers expect to be held to high standards. Our soldiers want to win. Winning Spirit allows a team of teams to reach its full potential. Winning Spirit is the key to overcoming hardship and adversity. Our soldiers must be ready to go to war with the total confidence that America's Army will win. Such total confidence will only exist where Winning Spirit is pervasive, vibrant, and alive. Winning Spirit is the ultimate force multiplier for America's Army.

Winning Spirit Counts !!!!

THOMAS A. SCHWARTZ
General, USA
Commanding

Total Army Integration

